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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the roots of youth violence in U.S. society and the specific risk factors that predispose children to use violence. Using surveys of the literature, interviews with researchers, and an observation of an intervention, the report describes a highly successful school-based program of identification and intervention for high-risk children at early ages. Some of the risk factors that are examined are those that stem from cultural variables, which affect everyone, and individual variables, which affect certain children. Children exposed to risk factors follow a well-described path towards violence, and it is the schools' responsibility to identify at-risk children early in the students' careers and to offer intervention. However, some schools cannot offer help. These unsafe schools lack cohesion and feature chaotic, stressful, poorly structured environments. Conversely, safe schools allow students to feel nurtured, cared for, accepted, and protected. Various factors contribute to the making of a safe school, including the design and use of the physical space itself. Some suggestions for identifying at-risk students and what can be done to intervene with their violent behavior are offered. Schools may employ primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention measures to help their students. (Contains 26 references.) (RJM)

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Antisocial Behavior in Youth:

Causes, Consequences and Interventions

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Extended Essay

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Abstract

In recent years the number of children and youth who have taken a path to school failure, delinquency and violence has grown significantly. Children start along this path of destructive behavior because they are exposed to family, neighborhood, school and/or societal risk factors at a young age. These factors include poverty, harsh parenting, family transitions, and many more. A strong link has been established between these risk factors and the development of destructive behaviors and other long term negative outcomes. However, these patterns can be avoided if a child is identified and treated early enough. Many intervention models have been proven to be successful. This paper will review the risk factors, the path toward violence, early identification and finally, prevention.

Methods of investigation included surveys of the literature, interviews with researchers, and an observation of an intervention. This research has led me to the conclusion that schools have the responsibility to both identify at-risk children early in their school careers and to intervene with these students (and others involved such as parents, teachers, peers, etc.) in order to divert them from this path toward violence. When this path leads to delinquency and criminal behavior society pays a far greater price than that of early identification and intervention.

Table of Contents

Abstract

Introduction.....1

Risk Factors.....2

Path Toward Violence.....5

Safe and Unsafe Schools.....7

Identification.....8

Intervention.....10

Secondary Prevention: The First Step to Success Program....14

Conclusion.....16

Works Cited.....18

Acknowledgments

Introduction

Over 10,000 students bring weapons to school each day, and each year 40 are killed or wounded by these weapons (Walker, et. al. 1996). Youth violence has accelerated tremendously in the past few decades. It has been suggested that the United States has become the most violent developed country in the world with the preponderance of violent acts accounted for by youth under the age of nineteen. For the first time in decades the number of violent acts against strangers is higher than those committed against acquaintances (Hughes & Hasbrouk, 1996). Twenty-two percent of our nation's students will not use school bathrooms for fear of assault and more than 6,000 teachers are threatened every year (Walker, et. al. 1996). Increasingly, children are coming from homes where antisocial behavior is accepted. These youth enter school with the belief that violence is the solution to conflict. They are convinced that the actions of others are biased against them personally and this distorts their ability to correctly interpret any behavior. As a defense they tend to act aggressively, a behavior called *active aggression*, in situations where they feel threatened.

Rather than dealing with the situation proactively, our society is becoming more tolerant and adjusting lifestyles to compensate for violent behavior. We must change our direction. The rising incidence of youth violence cannot be controlled by punishment after the fact, and yet the United States incarcerates a larger proportion of its citizens, and its youth, than any other country in the world. Instead, it is essential that we take a personal and political stand that denounces all forms of violence. We must, as a society, re-examine our beliefs and reprioritize our values, turning away from aggression, competition and dominance, toward empathy, mutuality, cooperation and interdependence. This will require a reinvestment of resources into social programs which strengthen families, reduce substance abuse, eliminate poverty and increase a spirit of community belonging in order to decrease social alienation.

Of even more concern is the clear failure of our society to effectively cope with these problems. Instead of offering prevention, early intervention and treatment, we have built more prisons and increasingly enacted laws that treat youth as adult criminals. These developments are more frustrating in light of the existence of well proven methods of identifying young children who are at high risk for violent and destructive behaviors as teenagers or adults. In fact, we now know that certain specific antisocial behavior patterns and high levels of aggression exhibited in preschool and kindergarten are not just correlated, but are highly predictive, of violent, delinquent and criminal behaviors in middle school, later adolescence and adulthood (Fagan, 1996; Walker, et. al., 1996).

This paper will examine the roots of youth violence in our society and specific risk factors predisposing toward it. It will then describe a highly successful school-based program of early identification and intervention for high risk children at early ages.

Risk Factors

Risk factors that predispose toward the development of violent behavior can be divided into two general categories: a) cultural variables that affect everyone, and b) individual variables that affect certain children and increase their vulnerability. Cultural factors can further be divided into family based, school based, neighborhood and community based, and nationally based. Cultural factors include such influences as changing social norms, decreased civility, increased divorce, social mobility, violence in the media and an increase in acceptance of violent behavior. In addition, over the past several decades, many social scientists have observed a growing emphasis on self absorption, individual achievement and immediate gratification, and a corresponding decreased valuation of group and community needs and a sense of interdependence and mutuality. There seems to be an attitude of "take all you can!" that disregards the social impact of one's behavior.

Neighborhood and community based risk factors include easy accessibility to firearms and drugs, along with community laws and norms favorable toward their use, high transition and mobility, low neighborhood attachment and cohesion coupled with community disorganization, and finally, severe economic and social deprivation. School based risk factors include early and persistent antisocial behavior with peers, academic failure in elementary school, and lack of commitment toward school. Family variables include family history of high risk behavior, family management problems, family conflict, and negative parental attitudes and low involvement in children's lives. Last but not least, individual factors include social alienation and rebelliousness, friends who engage in problem behaviors, favorable attitudes toward problem behaviors and early appearance of this behavior (Walker et. al., 1996). Furthermore, across these contexts, important risk factors include dysfunctional and chaotic families (separation divorce, workalholism, and blended, single parent and dual career families), drug and alcohol abuse by primary caregivers, incompetent parenting, neglect, emotional and physical abuse, negative attitudes toward school, and parental modeling of physical and verbal aggression (Hawkins & Catalano, 1992). These variables, as well as our social milieu with its emphasis on consumerism, moneymaking and the profit motive, encourage the development of antisocial attitudes and self centered, coercive behavioral patterns.

The Oregon Social Learning Center and the Lane County Department of Youth Services (DYS) have developed a profile of the typical severely at-risk adolescent referred to the Lane County Department of Corrections. The risk factors these students manifest are 1) parental arrest, 2) involvement of child protective services, 3) incidence of family transition (death, divorce, trauma, family upheaval), 4) involvement of special education services and 5) a history of early and /or severe antisocial behavior. Three or more of these factors significantly increase the child's risk for long term delinquency and other problems. Many of the youth referred to DYS exhibit all five of these factors (Walker, 1999). Furthermore, the length of time and the number of risks to which a child is

exposed increases the likelihood of an aggressive, self centered and dysfunctional behavioral style.

Moffit (1994) has identified a group of children referred to as "early starters". These children engage in such antisocial behaviors as defiance of adults, and cruelty towards peers (taunting and provoking, bullying, hitting, yelling, mean-spirited teasing, throwing tantrums). They enter school with these behavioral patterns well established primarily because of their early exposure to many of the risk factors listed above. These children's problems are exacerbated because their negative behavior usually results in their rejection by both teachers and peers who are overwhelmed by their coercion, aggression and humiliation of others. Patterson (et.al., 1992) and Reid (1993) have shown that this rejection by both teachers and peers is a key developmental stage on these children's path toward school failure and delinquency. The steps along this path will be described in greater detail later. Rejection by teachers and peers, can lead to early school drop out which, in turn, increases a youth's risk for delinquent and criminal behavior. Eighty percent of day time crimes nationally and 90% of daytime burglaries in Los Angeles County are committed by truant or suspended juveniles (Crowe, 1995; Bostic,1994).

In order to succeed in school, children need to master certain minimal behavioral and interpersonal competencies, some related to teacher adjustment and others to peer adjustment. These have to do with the ability to affiliate, to adjust, to control anger, to comply and cooperate, to listen and communicate, to delay gratification, and to ask for help (See Figure 2). Walker's research (1996, 1997, 1999) indicates that almost all of the at-risk children discussed earlier do not possess even the minimal interpersonal and behavioral competencies essential to school success. Once rejected by their teachers and peers, these students often band together to form deviant or disruptive gangs which later run into trouble with the law (Dodge, 1995; Dodge et.al., 1992; Dishion et.al, 1994).

Path Toward Violence

It has been shown that children exposed to these risk factors follow a well described and documented path beginning with behavioral manifestations and reactions such as defiance of adults, lack of school readiness and aggression toward peers (See Figure 1; Walker & Sprague, 1999). This leads to negative short term outcomes including truancy, peer and teacher rejection, low academic achievement and early involvement in drugs and alcohol. These factors set a child up for school failure and eventual dropout, which leads finally to negative and destructive long term outcomes such as delinquency, adult criminality and violence. An increasing number of children are now exposed to these risk factors and then follow this unfortunate path. We know that a child can be diverted from this path, but success depends on early intervention. The farther the child goes down this destructive path, the more likely it is that he or she will reach the end, and adopt an antisocial behavior pattern throughout life. In the words of Reid and his colleagues, "We have the ability to find these at-risk children and youth early, but we generally prefer to wait, to not do anything, and hope that they grow out of their problems. In far too many cases, in the absence of intervention and appropriate supports for their emerging behavior problems, they grow into and adopt an antisocial behavior pattern during their school careers." (Reid, 1993).

After reading the literature, talking with experts and observing in classrooms, I would argue, along with Hill Walker and other colleagues, that schools have the responsibility to both identify at-risk children early in their school careers and to intervene with these students (and others involved such as parents, teachers, peers, therapists, mental health practitioners, juvenile authorities, social welfare and child service agencies) in order to divert them from this path toward violence. Unfortunately, most of these students' parents cannot or will not accept this responsibility. When this path leads to social rejection, school dropout, further social alienation, delinquency, violence, gang membership (to satisfy a frustrated need for affiliation), criminal behavior and

Figure 1
The Path to Long Term Negative Outcomes for At-Risk Children and Youth

Exposure to family, neighborhood, school and societal risk factors
Leads to development of maladaptive behavioral manifestations
Produces negative short term outcomes
To negative, destructive long term outcomes

Poverty, abuse, neglect, harsh and inconsistent parenting drug and alcohol use by caregivers
Emotional and physical or sexual abuse
Modeling of aggression
Media violence
Negative attitude toward schooling
Family transitions (death or divorce)
Parent criminality

defiance of adults,
lack of school readiness,
coercive interactive styles,
aggression toward peers,
lack of problem solving skills

truancy, peer and teacher rejection,
low academic achievement
high number of school discipline referrals,
large number of different schools attended
early involvement with drugs and alcohol
early age of first arrest (less than 12 years)

school failure and dropout, delinquency
drug and alcohol use; gang membership,
violent acts, adult criminality,
lifelong dependence on welfare system,
higher death and injury rate

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incarceration, society pays a far greater price than that of early identification and intervention.

To date, we have paid dearly by being reactive rather than proactive in our responses to this problem (Kulongoski, 1996). Our schools are uniquely positioned to access these children and to coordinate the professionals, agencies and resources to identify and treat them. They cannot, however, be expected to perform these tasks without the commitment of financial, manpower, research, and social and community supports that such an undertaking presupposes. This commitment in turn requires a shared perception of our schools as a mutually owned and cherished community responsible not only for the education of our youth in academic skills, but also for the teaching of appropriate interpersonal behavior, communication skills, basic social values and a sense of community, mutuality, trust and cooperation.

Of course, this raises the question of whether schools should teach "values" in the absence of effective teachers at home and especially in light of the decreasing role of religious standards and the church as a socializing and values teaching agent. I would argue that there exist different types of values. We, as a society, do not all subscribe to the same set of religious beliefs, but the majority of Americans do value mutuality, interpersonal affiliation, good communication skills, positive relationships and non-violent expression of disagreement, anger and conflict resolution. These skills can be taught in school without interfering with "values" or dogma that are idiosyncratic to a particular religious, social or ethnic group.

Safe and Unsafe Schools

Research (Walker et. al., 1996) has identified the major characteristics of safe and unsafe schools. Unsafe schools tend to lack cohesion. Their environments are chaotic, stressful, poorly structured and disorganized. There is a strong presence of gang activity, violence, and unclear academic and behavioral standards. On the other hand, in safe

schools, students feel nurtured, cared for, accepted and protected. There is no violence and no sense of the possibility of physical or psychological harm. Other factors that contribute to higher school risk are overcrowding, lack of caring but firm disciplinary standards and procedures, insensitivity to multicultural diversity, high student alienation, neglect or overt rejection of high risk students, and poor supervision. Interestingly, the design and use of the physical school space itself has been identified as an important factor in the level of risk for school alienation and violence.

Other factors that help prevent school violence are a positive atmosphere in the school, clear (and high) performance expectations for all students, strong student bonding to the school (school "spirit"), high levels of student and parent involvement, opportunities for students to learn academic and social skills, school wide attention to conflict resolution, and a general sense of inclusion and non-discriminatory values.

Large schools with high student-to-teacher ratios make it more difficult for teachers to form meaningful relationships with students or to identify individual student's needs. School overcrowding results in more problems with discipline and vandalism. Isolation of teachers from each other, from the administration, from parents and from the neighborhoods in which they teach make them less effective. Obviously, schools can be made no safer than the communities in which they are located.

Identification

Currently, there are a wide range of procedures used to identify students in need of special education and related services, but for the most part they begin with a teacher referral. Studies have shown that teachers are competent judges of student's behavioral characteristics but they tend to be very selective in their referrals. Teacher referrals are also influenced by their idiosyncratic behavioral standards and tolerance of student behavior. Generally, students are much more likely to be referred for externalizing problems (acting out) rather than internalizing problems (social avoidance). If students

are not disruptive to the classroom setting, but are experiencing emotional or behavioral problems, they are unlikely to get a referral because they do not create problems for the teacher. Children who internalize problems are usually socially withdrawn and teachers assume either that it is not the teacher's responsibility, or that the students' problems cannot be solved in the classroom. For these reasons, many students who need help slip through the cracks.

The importance of proactive mass screening is based on the assumption that early identification and intervention would be much more effective than dealing with a child's antisocial or destructive behaviors later in life. Many times the referral comes after a child's behavior has already become well established and effective intervention is nearly impossible. For this reason it is important that all students participate in early screening to identify those who are at-risk and manifest their problems either externally or internally. An effective and cost efficient procedure has been developed by Walker and Severson called the Systematic Screening for Behavioral Disorders (SSBD) (Walker, et. al.,1990). This procedure screens *all* students in an elementary grade classroom and consists of three interrelated stages. In Stage 1 the teacher evaluates the behavioral characteristics of each student and then ranks them in order according to whether their behavior is primarily internalizing or externalizing in nature. In Stage 2 teachers rate the top three ranked externalizers and the top three internalizers on the Critical Event Index (high-intensity-low-frequency behaviors) and Likert scale rating of the frequency of occurrences of adaptive and maladaptive forms of behavior. Students needing further evaluation are indicated by cutoff points derived from national normative databases. Stage 3 consists of observations of potentially at-risk students in classroom and playground settings on two occasions. As in Stage 2, normatively derived cutoff points for Stage 3 observations are used to determine if a student needs referral to the school's child study team for further evaluation and possible classification as eligible for special education supports and services. It cannot be stressed enough how crucial this screening process is

to the well being of our children and our future. As mentioned before, at-risk children can be diverted from an inevitable path of destruction leading to delinquency and adult criminality when identified and helped early enough.

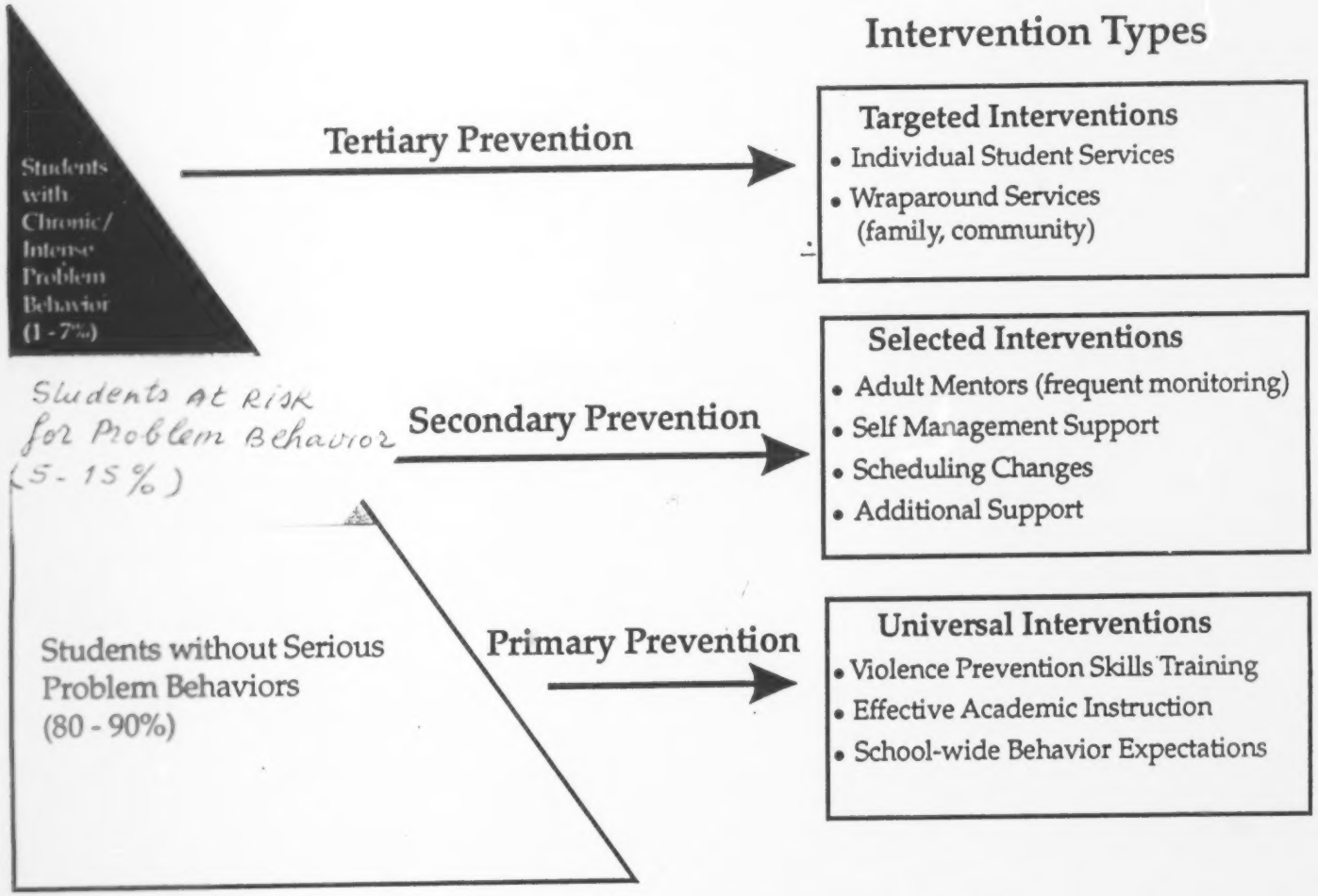
Intervention

Walker and colleagues recommend a proactive approach for use by schools involving: 1) screening of all the children in kindergarten and first grade to identify signs of potentially aggressive and/or destructive behavior patterns; 2) intervention through primary, secondary and tertiary prevention programs to divert children from the "path toward violence" and the juvenile justice system; 3) discontinuation of reactive, punitive forms of sanctions and intervention (suspension, expulsion); 4) the development of alternative placements for certain youth (Macmillon et.al., 1996). It is essential that we keep these students within the school system as long as possible in order to prevent the almost inevitable social alienation that results from dropout or expulsion.

Until recently, schools have typically responded to antisocial behavior with the traditional punitive methods: school suspensions, expulsions, referrals to the principal and detention. These methods are never adequate. They do not produce long term change because they do not address the roots of the problem. In fact, research has shown that punishment based interventions with these youth result in an increase in antisocial and violent behavior (Mayer & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1990). These methods may make schools safer at the expense of our communities, where these out of school youth are increasingly found on the streets engaging in socially inappropriate and destructive behaviors (Bostic, 1994).

Three types of students can be identified in any school: 1) typical students who are not at-risk, 2) students who are at-risk for developing antisocial behavior and 3) students who are "early starters" or show signs of "life-course-persistent" antisocial behavior (See Figure 2; Walker & Sprague, 1999). Depending on the degree of severity of the student's

Figure 2
Preventing Violent and Destructive Behavior in Schools: Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Systems of Intervention


Intervention Types
Students with Chronic/ Intense Problem Behavior (1 - 7%)
Tertiary Prevention
Targeted Interventions
• Individual Student Services
• Wraparound Services (family, community)
Students at Risk for Problem Behavior (5 - 15%)
Secondary Prevention
Selected Interventions
• Adult Mentors (frequent monitoring)
• Self Management Support
• Scheduling Changes
• Additional Support
Students without Serious Problem Behaviors (80 - 90%)
Primary Prevention
Universal Interventions
• Violence Prevention Skills Training
• Effective Academic Instruction
• School-wide Behavior Expectations

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behavior, different prevention strategies have been developed for addressing them. Walker and his colleagues have described a model for prevention of antisocial behavior in the school involving primary, secondary and tertiary forms of prevention.

Primary prevention strategies use universal interventions to increase protective factors in any given school. This form of prevention is used primarily so students do not become at-risk and goals are universal in that all students are exposed in the same way and at the same level. Primary prevention will be effective for 80-90% of the students (those without serious problem behaviors) and includes violence prevention skills training, instruction in conflict resolution and anger management strategies, effective academic instruction, and school-wide behavior expectations and disciplinary policies to ensure a smoothly run school environment. "Primary prevention is much like putting fluoride in a community's water supply in order to prevent dental cavities" (Walker, et.al., 1996). Teaching skills for school success decreases the likelihood of dropout and perhaps delinquency. These skills include being prepared, arriving to class on time, completing assignments and asking for assistance when needed. Although this prevention model is not adequate for the needs of high risk children, it establishes a positive school atmosphere and perhaps manages to divert some of the children who are mildly at-risk from a destructive path. Even if schools lack the resources to enact secondary and tertiary prevention strategies, primary prevention approaches can positively influence children. This approach is greatly underutilized and its impact could be enormous.

Recently, a universal prevention program has been developed and implemented for kindergarten through eighth grade students called Second Step. This violence prevention curriculum program teaches four skills important to all students: empathy, impulse control, problem solving, and anger management. This curriculum is designed to be taught at each grade level in K-8 and contains both school and parent involvement components. Second Step is based on 30 different skills that are taught for half an hour daily using teaching techniques such as problem solving, role plays, discussion, and question and answer.

Studies have reported (Committee for Children, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1992) that after participating in the program, children's social problem-solving skills and perspective taking improved and the majority better showed skill levels higher than for those students who did not participate.

Secondary Prevention targets the 5-15% of students who are clearly at-risk for problem behavior. Students who do not respond positively to the universal prevention become candidates for this more intensive approach and require a more individually tailored intervention that is more time intensive and costly. "Secondary prevention is much like increasing one's scheduled visits to the dentist because of an increased susceptibility (e.g., soft or thin enamel) for dental cavities or initiating an orthodontic intervention because of teeth overcrowding" (Walker, et.al., 1996). Examples of secondary prevention include individual counseling, provision of adult mentors, behavior management programs, scheduling changes and additional supports and services. An example of a successful model of secondary prevention will be described in more detail later.

Finally, tertiary prevention is designed for the 1-7% of students with chronic or intense problem behavior. These children usually exhibit life-course-persistent antisocial behavior usually involving delinquent or violent acts. "In our dental analogy, individuals at this level would be candidates for significant cavity repairs, root canals, bridges, and other expensive forms of dental care" (Walker, et.al., 1996). Generally schools alone cannot provide all the resources and services needed to accommodate these children. It is not only necessary economically but also essential to the child's development to include other services. Tertiary prevention can only be successful in school applications with the help of wraparound services and interagency partnerships. Intervention must be comprehensive, initiated early and must involve a team of at *least* three of the key social agents in the child's life (most likely parents, teachers and peers). A child's *team* may

consist of parents, community agency personnel (e.g., juvenile corrections, welfare), educators, administrators and support staff (school psychologists, counselors).

Secondary Prevention: The First Step to Success Program

First Step to Success is a secondary prevention program that is designed for early intervention of kindergartners and contains three components: 1) A universal screening procedure to detect at-risk children, 2) school intervention designed to teach an adaptive prosocial behavior pattern, and 3) a home intervention to teach parents the skills required to help their child succeed in school (i.e., cooperation, listening, communication, problem solving). First Step to Success is designed mainly for those children who begin their school careers with already developed or emerging behavioral problems. The program's main goal is to set children off to a good start from the first moment they enter the school door and hopefully divert them from a path leading to destructive behavior. The school intervention requires 30 successfully completed program days. To move through the program a specified behavioral criterion has to be met each day. Once a child is identified as at-risk (via screening) and qualifies for the First Step program, a consultant arranges and prepares for its implementation. The consultant observes the child in the classroom, role plays the daily program or "game" with him or her and explains it to the child's teacher, parents, and peers along with their roles in it implementation. The consultant is in charge of the intervention for the first five days or so and then turns the school portion over to the teacher (Golly, et.al., 1998).

I observed this program in process at a school in Eugene. Nick (name has been changed) was a child with an uncontrollable temper. When he became angry he would throw tantrums, screaming and on occasion even throwing chairs. When he was in this state he had to be physically removed from the room. I observed the intervention on the last day the consultant was in charge and already Nick had shown tremendous improvement. The program works like this: The consultant, who has already informed

all the children in the classroom of the "game" she is playing with Nick, asks the class how they can help him. "Say 'good job'", one child says. "Encourage him!", says another. The children are all excited about the game because if Nick wins, the whole class receives a longer free time or a special activity. The consultant wears a card around her neck, one side green and the other red. As the teacher teaches the class, the consultant keeps an eye on Nick and, depending on his behavior, shows him the green or red card. Every five minutes she marks the card on whichever side it happens to be on. If, at the end of 30 minutes Nick has received 80% of the tallies on the green card, he and his fellow classmates get their reward activity. Although the red card is flashed a few times, Nick keeps his behavior in check and corrects himself. When he gets frustrated, he even seems to put himself on time out; he closes his eyes, takes a deep breath and takes himself out of a potentially bad situation. Nick's self control has improved tremendously.

At the end of each day the child takes the card home to his parents and has it signed. If insufficient points are earned, the parents give no punishment; his consequences are that he receives no reward at home that day. The red-green card system discourages antisocial behavior in that the child receives mostly positive attention from all the important people in his life, depending on his or her behavior. First Step to Success also includes an at home component called homeBase. It focuses on six child skills necessary for school success. These skills include communication (sharing about school), cooperation, setting and accepting limits, solving problems, making friends and building confidence. The parent and child do an activity together veered toward each skill for five to ten minutes a night. An example is an activity called "Find a Treasure" in which the child hides an object and then gives a parent clues, one at a time, about where it is hidden (Paglin). This game gives the child practice in communication. HomeBase also builds communication between parent and child. It teaches parents effective ways of opening up discussions with their child about school such as asking more specific questions. For

example, instead of asking, "How was school today?" a parent should instead ask questions like "What did you do in math?" and "Did you learn any new words?" (Paglin).

The goals of homeBase for parents, children, and teachers are as follows: The parents learn the skill, provides for daily practice, and rewards the practice; the teacher knows the skill, praises its use, and provides feedback to parents; the child learns, practices and uses the skill (Golly, et. al., 1998). Without the cooperation of all these individuals the program cannot be successful.

Conclusion

We as a society need to reexamine our values towards violence and come to a common understanding that it cannot be accepted. Currently, the lesson our children are being taught, whether it be through family, peers or media, is that violence is power and an acceptable way to solve problems or get one's way. Our society needs to help our young people recommit to the community rather than overvaluing individual needs. In this world, full of materialism and a craving for money and power, we have lost sight of the core value upon which this nation was built: *Love thy neighbor as thyself.* Our teens have grown up in a world in which image is valued over personality and sex over love. If we are to rid schools of violence we must be proactive in our decisions and dig to the roots of the problem.

Violence can be prevented in schools if children are not exposed to the numerous risk factors listed above. Researchers have shown that antisocial behavior patterns that appear early in a child's life constitute a huge risk factor for a host of negative, long-term outcomes (Patterson, et. al.,1982). We have the ability to identify these at-risk children at very young ages and to successfully divert them from a destructive path, yet we too often ignore the problem in the hope that it will go way. But this problem will not disappear. In fact, without attention, it will severely worsen. In the absence of intervention and appropriate supports, many at-risk children adopt an antisocial behavior pattern they will

keep for the rest of their lives (Reid, 1993) . For these reasons, we owe it to ourselves, our children and our society as a whole to provide services of identification and treatment for all children everywhere.

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Appendix

"PeaceBuilders®" is another intervention for K-5 children. By using applied and clinical research from diverse fields of study, it creates a socio-cultural environment that models, coaches, and rewards positive ("resilient") social behavior while reducing interactions that increase developmental vulnerability. The approach uses practical tools from social skills, problem-solving behavior, parent education, and academic research and relies heavily on social-marketing strategies. The program provides extensive models of positive behavior across a wide variety of settings in order to assure generalization of the behavior. Cues to negative behavior and threatening stimuli are reduced. Coping styles (seeking help and problem-solving) are modeled rather than mastery behavior (perfect implementations). High rates of positive feedback for imitation of behaviors and frequent opportunities to discuss and correct behaviors are provided. There are many environmental cues, prompts, and tools that constantly reinforce positive behaviors and generalization across time and settings.

The program develops a common language that is positive in nature (emphasizes behavior styles to be adopted rather than ones to be avoided). It uses stories and live models to foster imitation of positive behaviors and environmental cues such as classroom decorations and signs, decreased density, and environmental comfort. Role plays are used to teach positive behaviors and to change negative ones following a negative interaction. There are frequent and varied positive verbal consequences and rewards for positive behavior and losses of rewards for negative behavior. Threat reduction techniques are used to reduce cognitive distortions that trigger violence. Self and peer monitoring skills strategies promote generalization of behavior and are also taught. All of these tools are packaged and distributed across all relevant segments of the community and to parents at home, to schools, to children, and peers themselves, to counselors, neighborhoods, businesses, civic groups, and volunteers.

PeaceBuilders was intentionally designed to resemble more a product model than a human service model in the belief that this would promote popularity and more rapid dissemination. The program even uses a character—"ME®" that children identify with strongly. They themselves become the character and hero of PeaceBuilders. The character is used throughout all the materials to facilitate generalization and identification with the program. Every major group of people in the community has a specific role and script to help foster the program.

Implementation costs of the PeaceBuilders program are about $3.00-5.00 per child per year and training requires only about six hours since it is product rather than knowledge driven. Another $3.00-4.50 can be spent on broadening the approach to the mass media and after-school programs. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has funded a study of the impact of the approach involving 4,000 students. It has been used in over 40 elementary schools with promising results. Its proponents believe that over the course of a decade it can reduce the incidence of youth violence by 40-50%.